

# INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH-CONSORTIUM

## IDC CCCP – A BOTTOM-UP ENVIRONMENT TO SUPPORT

### INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

**Building bridges – Colloquium on interdisciplinary research (FWO, KVAB, JA, Departement EWI)**

Noël Klima, Brussels, 9 September 2019

# INTERDISCIPLINARY CONSORTIA (IDC) @UGENT

**UGent experience:** high individuality of researchers, less “big” funding due to smaller groups, lack of (focused) interdisciplinary cooperation and societal value creation, ... (new research policy framework in 2012)

- Strategic support of several SSH disciplines, later extended to all disciplines

Aim: support of **interdisciplinary bottom-up cooperation** towards societal impact (IDCs)



# PILOT FASE IDC-CONSORTIA

- Pilot funding 5 years for 5 consortia + coordinator
- “***Carte blanche***” to develop the consortium and to define and focus on relevant priorities
- Operate from scratch and define own mission, goals, way of working and outputs (bottom-up)
- Phase 1 (value creation through interdisciplinary cooperation) > evaluation
- Phase 2 (pathways to impact – impact planning) > evaluation

# GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS IDC-CONSORTIA

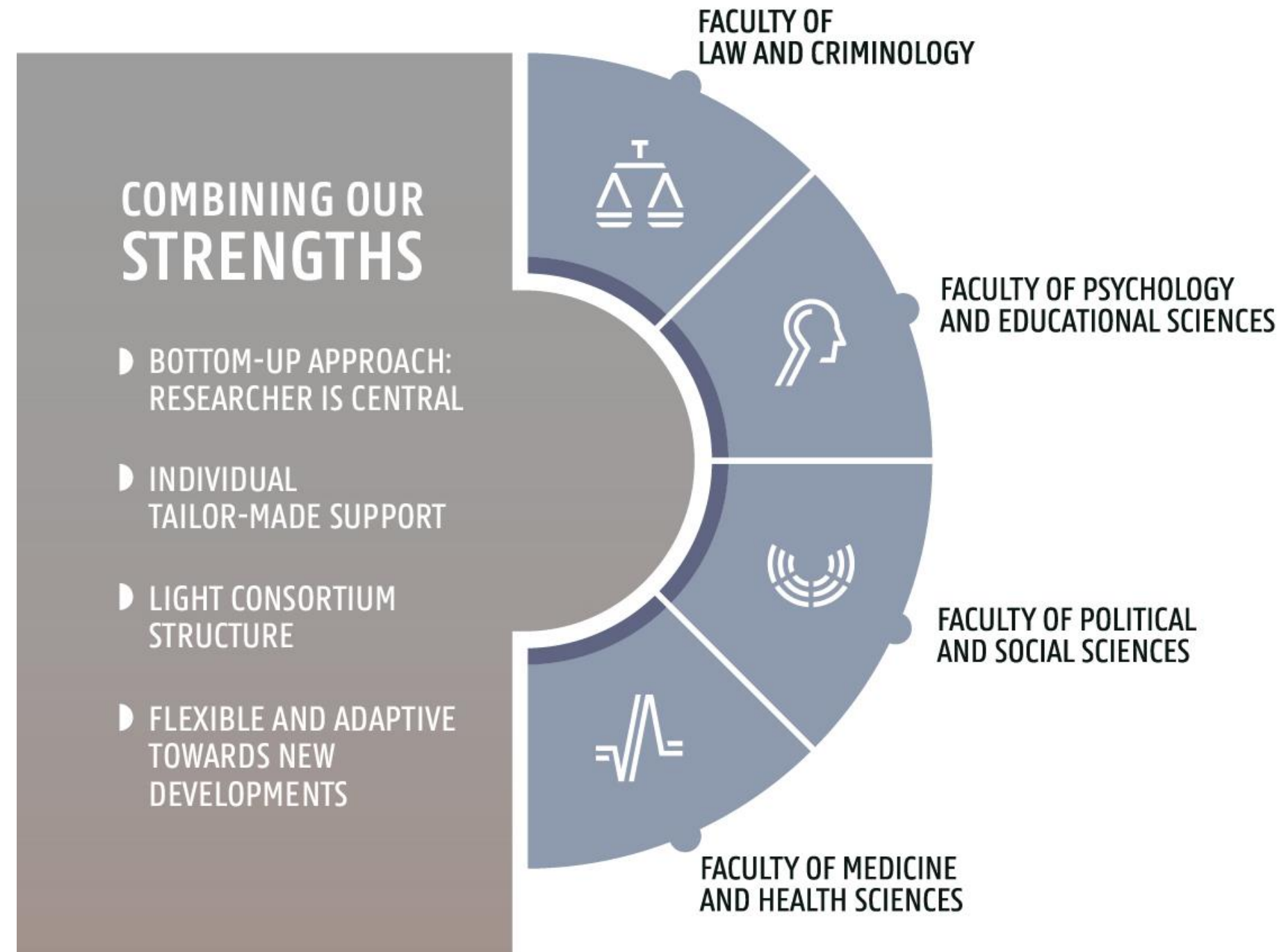
Group of engaged principal professors from different disciplines  
Dedicated research coordinator as knowledge broker  
Sharing of knowledge and resources  
Collaboration with Research Department and EU Office



Working together for mental health

+ 6 new IDCs

# IDC CRIME, CRIMINOLOGY & CRIMINAL POLICY (1)



# IDC CRIME, CRIMINOLOGY & CRIMINAL POLICY (2)

## WORKING TOGETHER TOWARDS 4 GOALS



Strengthening  
**SOCIETAL VALUE CREATION**  
initiatives and pathways to impact,  
including impact measurement



Obtaining  
**RESEARCH FUNDING**  
for interdisciplinary projects  
to conduct excellent research



Detecting and stimulating  
**SYNERGIES AND COOPERATION**  
within the group and with partners  
from different disciplines  
(including STEMM)



**ENABLING RESEARCHERS**  
to conduct more interdisciplinary  
research, apply through diverse  
funding channels and plan  
valorisation and societal impact

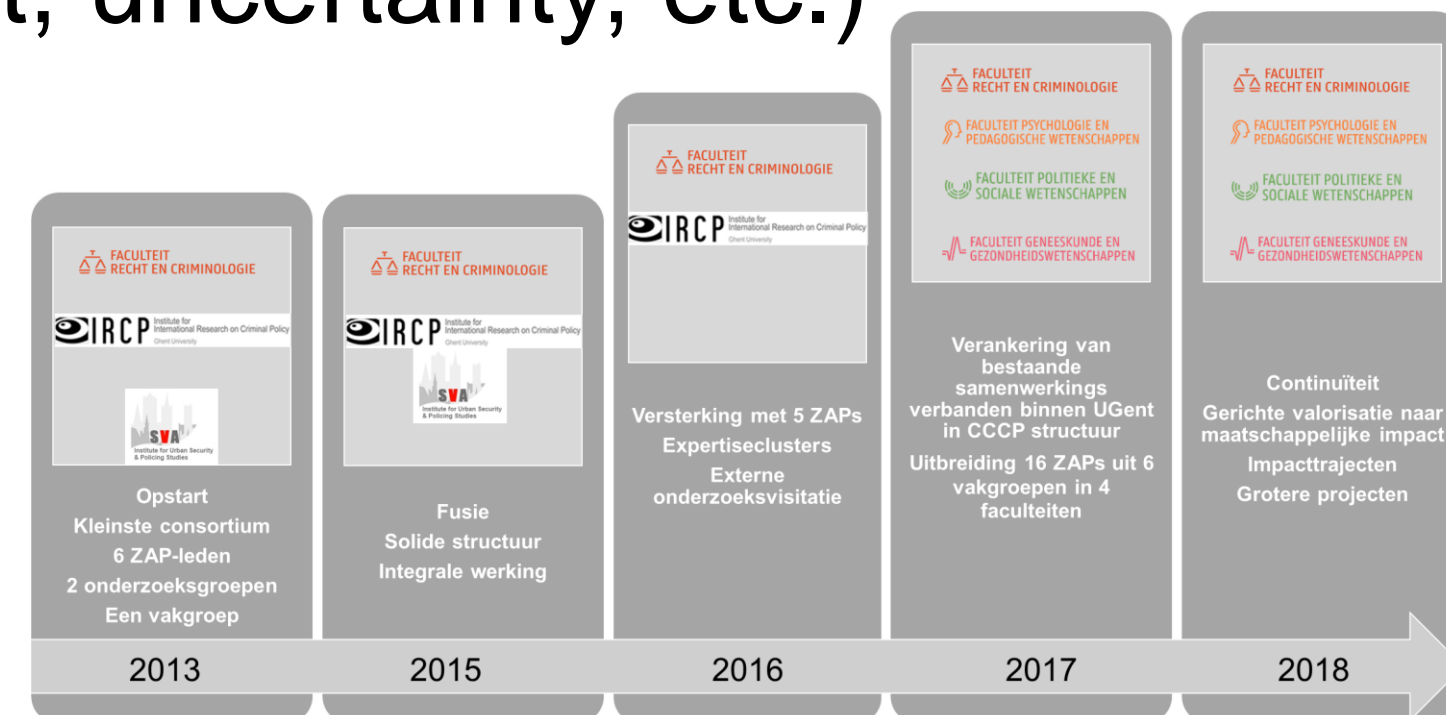
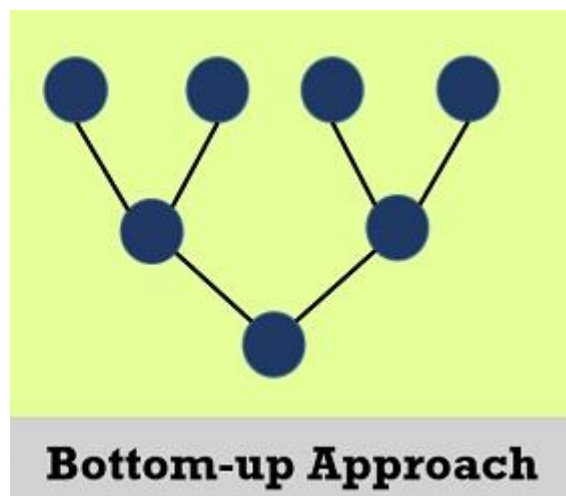


# IDC CRIME, CRIMINOLOGY & CRIMINAL POLICY ()



# BOTTOM-UP APPROACH: RESEARCHERS ARE CENTRAL

- Starting point are **existing relationships** of individual researchers (projects, guest lectures, etc.)
- From ad-hoc to more structural cooperation (through regular IDC initiatives)
- Consolidation of interdisciplinary cooperation and extension takes **time** (unawareness, hesitation, mistrust, uncertainty, etc.)





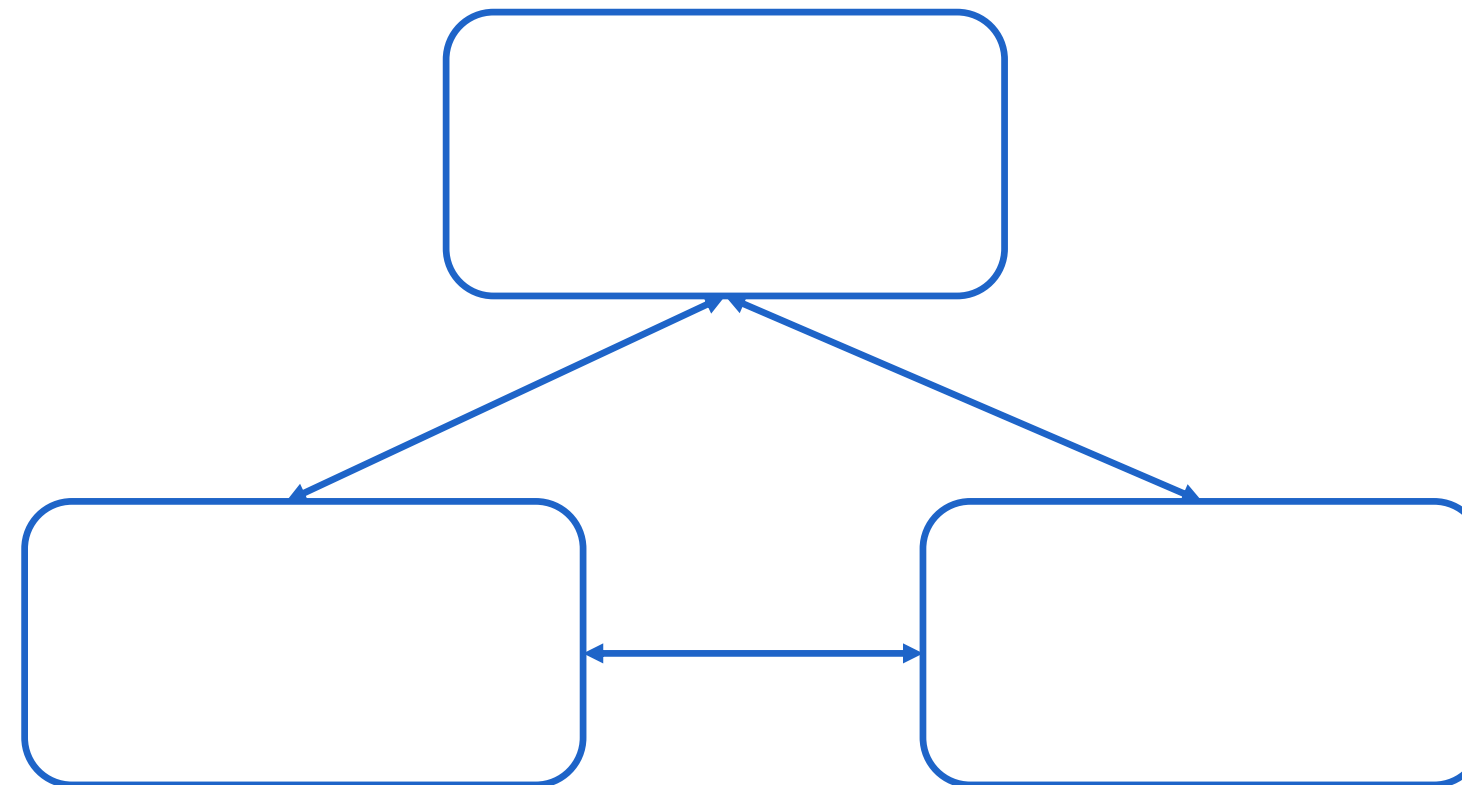
# INDIVIDUAL TAILOR-MADE SUPPORT

- **Needs of researchers** are collected on regular basis (1-1 meetings, group meetings)
- **Opportunities** for interdisciplinary cooperation, funding channels and ventures are provided on individual and group level
- Sharing **information** within the consortium (leading by example, share opportunities through structural internal communication)
- Support/advice for interdisciplinary project preparation



# LIGHT CONSORTIUM STRUCTURE

- **No heavy administrative burden** for the member researchers
- **Enough time** to build trust, dedication and commitment of all members as well as mutual recognition and understanding between researchers (and coordinator)
- IDC is **complementary structure** intertwined with all other structures



# FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTIVE TOWARDS NEW DEVELOPMENTS

- Coordinator is **knowledge broker** and keeps up with new developments/opportunities
- **Information flow** between researchers and coordinator (e.g. newsletter, news flash)
- Coordinator engages in **new initiatives** reports back and facilitates engagement of interested researchers (e.g. STEM-SSH match making, stakeholder events)



# MAJOR LESSON'S LEARNED

- Researchers
  - Triggering openness towards interdisciplinary opportunities takes time
  - Expose regularly to occurring opportunities
  - Take individual needs into account
  - Take existing social interaction/cooperation as a basis
  - Leading by example in the group
- Structure
  - Not rigid and top-down, but bottom-up across boundaries
  - No extra administrative burden
  - Central information exchange focal and support point
  - Support on individual and group level
  - Feeding interdisciplinarity rather than 'creating'
  - Size needs to stay workable

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<https://www.ugent.be/en/research/research-ugent/trackrecord/idcs.htm>